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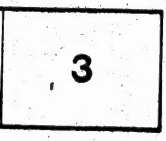

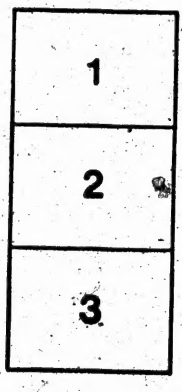

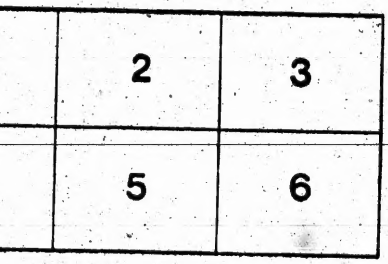

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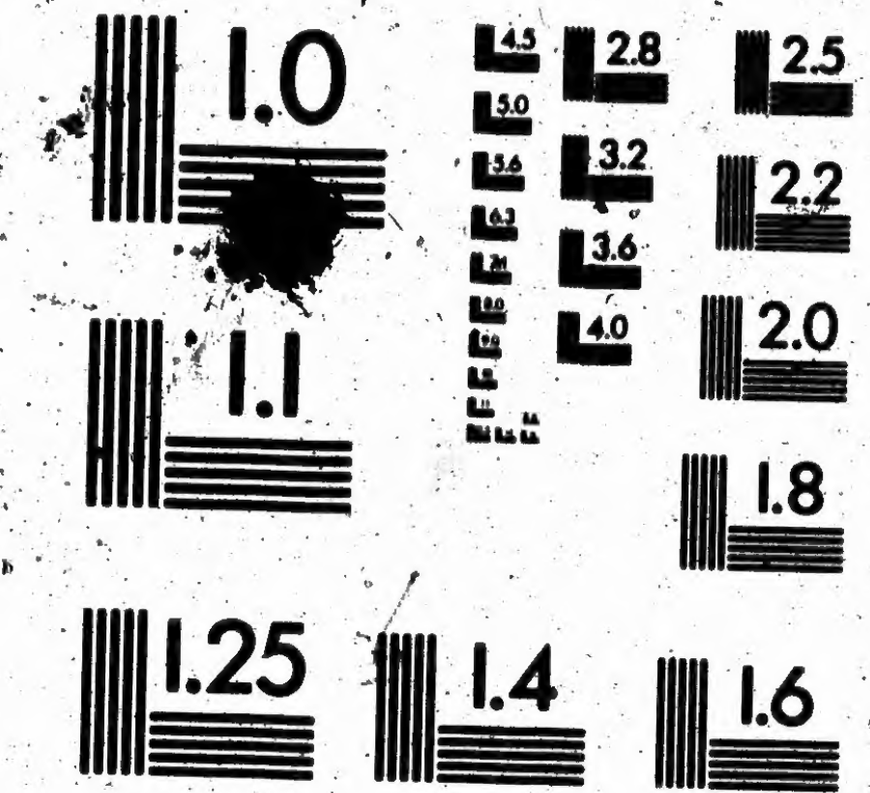

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DEVOTIONAL POEMS,

BY

A. J. WILLIAMSON.

THE FOOL HATH SAID IN HIS HEART, THERE IS NO GOD.—*Ps.* xiv, 1.

I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH.—*Job* xix, 25.

TORONTO:

ROGERS AND THOMPSON, PRINTERS.

1840.

570

DEDICATION.

To the Honorable and Right Reverend Father in God
JOHN, Lord Bishop of Toronto, &c. &c. &c.

May it please you, my Lord,

My motive in dedicating this little work to your lordship's notice, is certain to be, at least, misconstrued, in many quarters; and, for as many different reasons. But, in the fear of God, and the hope of his mercy, it is single—a heart-felt desire, namely, to make a public acknowledgment of the great kindness with which I have, occasionally, been relieved; when, under the pressure of a strong necessity, I have been driven to seek assistance at your lordship's hands. To many of your lordship's parishioners, also, I am under similar obligation; and I here thank them, as well,—together with all, who, in this city, under Divine favor, within an eventful period of five terrible years, have contributed, in various ways, to redeem me from a suicidal horror of utter want. Having thus gratified myself, by the free exposure of an abiding sentiment of my heart—and, with a longing desire for the time when the secrets of all hearts shall be open,—in the love of God, and in charity with all men.

I have the honor to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's
Most grateful
And most obedient
Humble servant,
A. J. WILLIAMSON.

No. 7, Lower George Street,
April 27, 1840.

ADVERTISEMENT.

These few Poems are, in all probability, the last that will appear by the Author. They have been written in a Spirit which cannot be known, but through *implicit* faith in its truth. They are offered to the public, as much with a view to show the workings of this kind of faith as otherwise. And, being acknowledged to be far beneath the standard of excellence which is felt to be needful—and, under other circumstances, attainable—they are dismissed without further preface or apology.

DEVOTIONAL POEMS.

POEM I.

I.

Holy Savior, I would write!
Let thy Spirit pure indite!
Of thee, to thee, be the theme—
Fount and ocean to the stream—
Father I do honor thee;
Be not thou ashamed of me!

II.

All eternity is here!
All of hope, and all of fear!
Heights and depths of good and ill,
Far and near, accessible!
Dust to Deity restored—
Glorified in Christ the Lord!

III.

High and Lofty One above !
Brother of an humble love !
All to me, as All in all,
When I stand and when I fall ;
Lord of promise, speedily
Perfect me in love to thee !

IV.

Take me in my weakness now :—
Comes the Reader ! Bless him Thou !
Bless him for the wish divine,
To be with a God like mine !
Halelujah ! favored most—
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !

POEM II.

Lovest thou me ?—John xxi. 15.

I.

Would that I had of thine, to show
The nameless nature of my love :
The strength of this desire, to flow
Out, in the fulness from above !
The astral Crown, in thee is bright ;

The Name, illustrious; and the Throne,
High o'er the hierarchies of light;
But Thou art Love!
And thou art loved, O, Lord, alone!

II.

Love thee? love life! Frail—frailest thought!
Shall he not know, who is the Eye,
The secret that in me is wrought,
Since God in mercy passed me by!
I sink beneath the wondrous cross,
Alarmed with Peter's doubtful freight;
Nor less at Paul's triumphant gloss—
Incarnate Love!
I shudder in eternal weight!

III.

Love thee! in thee alone secure,
I live, I move, and have my breath;
All else, the wish, even, to endure,
Is counted vanity and death!
It is presumption thus to be,—
Infinite mercy hence to fade,—
If I am not to honor thee,
Eternal Love!
Above all beings thou hast made!

POEM III.

FOR MUSIC.

I.

O, long to thee a stranger,
Whose favor life excels;
Unconscious of my danger,
I wrought in Satan's spells.
Wrought wearily for pleasure,
That made my heart full sore;
But now I find the treasure,
In thee forevermore.

II.

My soul, no longer burning
With sinful grief and shame;
Fired with thy love returning,
Finds rapture in the flame.
And I—alas! a dreamer,
To carnal mock and scorn,—
Adore thee, my Redeemer!
Exult that I was born!

III.

In glory to receive thee,
As God I must be true;
But well do I believe thee,
Almighty to renew.

And thus the perfect blessing,
Thy will in earth, is done;
While I, thy love confessing,
Show heaven on it begun.

POEM IV.

I.

My ransomed soul is wreathed in smile,
The glory from above;
I see the Invisible the while,
And hear his voice of love!
So dwell the truth of God in me:
But—oh! my grief sincere;
I look, alone, on what I see,
And list, to what I hear!

II.

Cold is the heart of unbelief,
To earthly sense confined;
And brief the comprehension, brief,
That bounds adoring mind!
Mind, infinite, in highest him,
To whom the dark is day;
Who bent beneath the seraphim,
To raise this wondrous clay!

III.

And shall an only grief remain,
A perfect love to kill!
Is every spirit asked in vain,
My bosom void to fill!
Father of mercies, understood,
Swift hath the message flown!
Angel of light! It is not good
For me to be alone!

POEM V.

Acts xiv. 17.

I.

Without a witness! Oh! no, no;
While earth and sky of being tell
And hope of joy, and fear of woe,
Preach to the heart of heaven and hell!
Not, while he has within my breast,
A testimony sweet and sure;
That faith in Him is to be blest,—
Is to be pure as he is pure!

II.

Without a witness! No, no, no;
He sanctifies my rising song;

And, grateful as the numbers flow,
Of him they are, to him belong!

But that He is the comforter—
The Holy One whom thus I see—
Oh! that He would at once declare,
And witness to the world for me!
Witness, as faithfully I teach
Life unto life, *the quickening fire;*
And unto death, as death I preach,
The *arrow*, in its quenchless ire!
Ah! let me his true kingdom spread,
As I have seen it, o'er and o'er,
Among the living and the dead;
And, trust me, guilt shall laugh no more!

POEM VI.

I.

The sun of faith to bless my sight,
High through dissolving darkness, glows;
And holy light,
From Salem's height,
Beyond his gladdening orbit, shows
The opening treasures of a night,
That never more shall close!

II.

Oh! I am saved by wondrous might!
The murky rill, translucent, flows!
The Ethiop, white,
Transcends in flight,
And finds immaculate repose,
Glory to God! eternal blight,
Hath passed from Sharon's Rose!

III.

To Him in Christ, who fought the fight!
Who won, and now the crown bestows!
My all I plight,
In this sweet rite,
To love his friends and hate his foes!
But when shall my poor heart indite,
The perfect praise it owes!

POEM VII.

(Republished from the Christian Guardian.)

On being reproved from the pulpit for our unchristian sorrowing, by our Ex-President, now at Quebec, the Rev. Mr. Harvard.

I.

Oh! breathe not such a stern rebuke,
On high and holy fear;
Think how the Lord's Anointed shook,
And spare the servant here!

His troubled soul, in view of hell,
Omnipotent in clay;
Trembled beneath a cross so fell,
And fainted by the way!

II.

There are, believe me, who can take
No terrible delight;
In God's own innocence at stake,
Against the powers of night!
Nor smile, while countless myriads, bent
On never dying pain;
Laugh at insulted punishment,—
Eternal Mercy slain!

III.

I, heaven attest, could wish indeed,
The Guiltless had not died;
But that my soul's immortal need,
Finds refuge in his side!
And, though to glory I aspire,
From the accursed tree;
I shrink from yonder quenchless fire,
And speechless agony!

IV.

Then, breathe not such a stern rebuke,
On high and holy fear;
Think how the Lord's Anointed shook,
And spared the servant here.
We grieve at tortured innocence,
In Jesus set at nought!
A cross that bowed Omnipotence,
Beneath the grasp of thought!

POEM VIII.

TO MY BIBLE.

O, long neglected—darkly read—
Sealed to me, prayerless and dead—
My star—my compass—homeward bound!
My heavenly chart to Zion found!

What freshness in thy leaves of grace!
What beauty in their forms I trace!
Thy buds—thy blossoms—fruit—sublime;
Predestined ere the birth of time,
To heal the nations under ban,
By faith and love to God in man!
Even angels to thy shade repair,
And life's eternal clusters share!

III.

Come, heavy laden unto me,
And I will give you rest!
Most truly he that cares for thee,
Alone can make thee blest.
Arise, his bidding to fulfil,
And, cheerful, take the load;
Or, if he smiles on thee, be still,
And lay it down in God!

STANZAS.

Altered from the Original, first published at Kingston, six years ago.

O, Sinners repentant, your triumph is nigh,
The standard of Calvary gleams in the sky ;
The grave is defeated and death, with his sting,
Lies prone in the dust to a crucified King !
The clouds that o'ershadowed your visions of old,
Are bright in the sunshine of silver and gold ;
The veil of your sorrows is rent and away,
And your eyes are a light in the glory of day.

Ye sing, and the mountains respond to your lays;
Ye shout, and the valleys are trembling with praise ;
The desert emotion is green in your song ;
And the wilderness leaps in its ecstacy strong !
The voice of the waters ! the drowning of strife !
The pealing of thunders ! the victory of life !
O, deep in your hearts let the numbers resound,—
Ye were dead, are alive—ye were lost and are found !

Hosanna ! to Him that hath conquered, afar,
With mercy and might in his coronal star ;
He comes in the power of his wrath to declare,
That all—all is lost to the prince of the air !
Behold him ye chosen, the Way and the Door !
Your shepherd returns and the fold is before !
The treasures of earth are with Dives out-driven,
But yours in the garners eternal of heaven !

LINES FOR A BLANK LEAF OF POLLOCK'S "COURSE OF TIME."

O glorious is the Fount that pours, sublime,
Its diamond waters down the "Course of Time,"
And oh! how brightly in the realms of day,
He shines who rose in this illustrious lay!

Spots in the sun let imperfection show,
The righteousness of man with God below;
We turn not with the envious to malign,
But greatly worship in his beams [illegible]

Bow Milton, Homer,—sons of [illegible]bow,
The wreaths Olympian, Arian, wither now;
Redeeming love descends in holiest fires,
And Christ is sung as God himself inspires.